

## Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 1269

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, ENRG, SP

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT OF GOVERNMENT

1. I MADE A COURTESY CALL ON PRESIDENT ARIAS NAVARRO FEBRUARY 21, MY FIRST SINCE HE BECAME PRESIDENT OF GOVERNMENT. DURING COURSE OF CONVERSATION, I REMARKED THAT I READ HIS FEB 12 SPEECH WITH GREAT INTEREST AND NOTED THAT IT HAD BEEN WELL RECEIVED WITHIN SPAIN AND ABROAD.

2. ARIAS COMMENTED THAT THE SPEECH WAS HARDLY "REVOLUTIONARY" AS SOME FOREIGN MEDIA PORTRAYED IT, NOR COULD IT BE CONSIDERED TO REPRESENT MAJOR CHANGE IN POLICY. PROGRAM OUTLINED BY SPEECH, HE STRESSED, REPRESENTED EFFORT TO KEEP UP WITH TIMES, SINCE WORLD HAS NOT STOOD STILL FOR 35 YEARS.

3. SPAIN'S YOUTH IN PARTICULAR, HE ADDED, CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO LIVE IN THE PAST. ONE CANNOT EXPECT PEOPLE WHO WERE BORN DURING AND AFTER CIVIL WAR TO HAVE THEIR THINKING ON THE EVENT OF THE WAR. SINCE THEY WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COUNTRY IN THE FUTURE THEY NEED OPPORTUNITIES NOW TO BEGIN EXERCISING LEADERSHIP. PRESIDENT COMMENTED THAT IT CANNOT BE ASSUMED THAT YOUTH WILL FOLLOW ANY PARTICULAR COURSE WHEN THEY TAKE THE REINS. GOVERNMENT'S ROLE THEN IS TO BRING THEM UP PROPERLY AND GIVE THEM RESPONSIBILITY IN HOPE  
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THAT THEY WILL ACT RESPONSIBLY IN THE FUTURE. THE PROGRAM OUTLINED

IN THE SPEECH, HE REITERATED, WHICH WAS NOT A REVOLUTION, AIMED AT THIS OBJECTIVE.

4. ARIAS INTIMATED THAT AT THE TIME OF CARRERO'S ASSASSINATION THERE HAD BEEN A GREAT DEAL OF UNCERTAINTY IN GOVERNMENT CIRCLES ABOUT THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE, BUT THE INSTITUTIONS HAD WORKED AND THE PEOPLE HAD REACTED WITH SERENITY. FROM THIS TRAGIC EXPERIENCE, THE COUNTRY HAD GAINED CONFIDENCE IN ABILITY TO FACE CHANGE.

5. ARIAS ALSO DISCOURSED AT LENGTH AND WITH SOME EMOTION ABOUT THE ENERGY CRISIS AND OIL PRODUCERS' ACTIONS SUCH AS THE EMBARGO AND THE EXORBITANT RISE IN OIL PRICES. WE CANNOT TOLERATE A GROUP OF PEOPLE WITH NOTHING EXCEPT WHAT GOD HAD PUT IN THEIR SOIL TO DISRUPT THE WORLD AND BRING IT TO ITS KNEES, AND TO CAUSE THE DISRUPTION THEY ARE CAUSING IN EUROPE AND THE WORLD. THEY MUST REALIZE THAT IN THE END THEY WILL SUFFER DAMAGE TOO. THEY HAVE NO FOOD, NO WATER, NOT EVEN THE HUMAN RESOURCES TO PROFIT FROM THEIR ACCUMULATION OF RICHES. THEY WILL FORCE UP THE PRICE OF EVERYTHING INCLUDING THE THINGS THEY MUST HAVE FROM ABROAD. THE SELFISH ACTION TAKEN BY CERTAIN POWERS IN EUROPE AT THE EXPENSE OF THE OTHERS IN MAKING DEALS WITH OIL PRODUCERS FOR THEIR OWN BENEFIT IS WRONG. ONLY SOLUTION IS TO ACT TOGETHER, AND WE LOOK TO THE U.S. AS THE GREATEST COUNTRY IN THE WEST TO PROVIDE THE LEADERSHIP. WITH ITS GREAT POWER AND WEALTH, THE US HAD A RECOGNIZED RESPONSIBILITY TO THE FREE WORLD AND HAS BEEN DISCHARGING IT IN A COMMENDABLE MANNER FOR MANY YEARS. NOW THAT THEY (MEANING THE ARABS) HAVE ATTAINED A POSITION OF WEALTH AND POWER THEY MUST ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY

TOO. THE ONLY ONES THAT PROFIT FROM THE EXISTING DISARRAY AND THE INTERNAL DIVISION IN THE WEST ARE THE RUSSIANS. THEY MUST BE SITTING THE SIDELINES GLOATING.

6. WHEN I CONGRATULATED THE PRESIDENT ON HIS ASSUMPTION OF THE PRESIDENCY AT SUCH AN IMPORTANT POINT IN MODERN SPANISH HISTORY, HE REMARKED THAT HE HAD NOT SOUGHT OR WORKED TO GET THE PRESIDENCY IT IS A DUTY TO ACCEPT SUCH AN OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE FRANCO AND SPAIN.

7. AS I DEPARTED, I MENTIONED THAT IN MY LAST CONVERSATION WITH THE LATE PRESIDENT CARRERO BLANCO, I HAD REMINDED HIM OF HIS CONFIDENTIAL

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AGREEMENT TO OBSERVE THE NEXT SIXTH FLEET/SPANISH NAVY/SPANISH AIR FORCE EXERCISE POOP DECK, AND THAT CARRERO HAD CONFIRMED HIS DESIRE TO DO SO. PRESIDENT ARIAS SAID HE ALSO WOULD BE VERY INTERESTED IN DOING SO, AND I TOLD HIM I WOULD BE IN CONTACT WITH HIM ON THE SUBJECT LATER ON. I INTEND TO FOLLOW UP WITH USCINCEUR/SIXTH FLEET AND TO ISSUE AN INVITATION ON BEHALF OF US GOVERNMENT.  
RIVERO

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